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To enrich lives through effective and caring service.



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To: Each Supervisor

From: Dave Lambertson 
Director

Subject: **STATUS REPORT - CONSOLIDATED FIRE/SHERIFF-OPS
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM PROJECT (CFSCS)**

On November 29, 2005 your Board approved an agreement with RCC Consultants Inc. (RCC) to develop a technical scope of work and evaluation tools for an RFP to acquire a Consolidated Fire/Sheriff-OPS Communications System (CFSCS). The CFSCS Executive Committee, consisting of representatives from Sheriff/Office of Public Safety, Fire, CAO, CIO, and ISD, has managed this project.

This is the second status report on this project. Details are included on the attachment. Key items are:

- RCC has finalized its recommendations for the radio spectrum to be used for voice (UHF) and data (700/800 Megahertz). The Executive Committee has adopted RCC's recommendations.
- RCC has finalized its recommendations for mobile and portable voice related equipment. The Executive Committee has adopted RCC's recommendations. Although there may be some exceptions, this will maximize our ability to use competitive bidding for portable and mobile voice equipment purchased to meet current needs. This equipment will also be compatible with the consolidated system requirements.
- RCC has finalized its recommendations related to a common data system. The Executive Committee has adopted RCC's recommendations. Departments will no longer pursue major upgrades to address their interim data needs and instead will pursue the RCC recommended solution. Much like in the case of voice, the Executive Committee will work together to develop a common approach to addressing current, critical, data related radio issues.

RCC is currently developing the requirements for a communications RFP. The original estimated completion date for this task was April 2007. Based on work to date, a revised schedule has been developed. The new target completion date is June 28, 2007.

- A Finance Task Force has been established with representatives from ISD, CAO, Fire, Sheriff, and OPS and is meeting on an ongoing basis.
- The CAO has selected Michael Thayer from Thayer Consulting as Project Manager. An agreement was negotiated with Thayer Consulting and the Project Manager began work on the project during May 2006.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting forth the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee member departments has been finalized. All departments have reached agreement on the MOU.
- In a parallel effort, the County continues to participate in the Regional Interoperability Steering Committee (RISC) system study. The process is evolving and the Board will be updated in future status reports.

Now that the CAO has assigned a Project Manager for this effort, future status reports will be provided by the CAO.

Questions on these or other issues may be directed to Ms. Sheila Williams in the CAO's office, who may be reached at (213) 893-2297.

DL:DM:dm

C: Chief Administrative Officer
Fire Chief
Sheriff
Chief, Office of Public Safety
CIO
ISD Board Deputies
Justice Deputies

ATTACHMENT

Consolidated Fire, Sheriff/OPS Communication System (CFSCS) Status Report for the Period Ending August 31, 2006

Background

During September 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with RCC Consultants Inc. (RCC) to study the feasibility of developing a consolidated Fire and Sheriff Radio system. On November 29, 2005 the Board approved a follow-on agreement with RCC to develop a technical scope of work and evaluation tools for an RFP to acquire a Consolidated Fire/Sheriff-OPS Communications System (CFSCS).

At that time, ISD was instructed to work with the CAO to develop a task force to focus on the financing aspect of the CFSCS project, and to provide quarterly status reports to your Board on the project. Parallel to the County's efforts, there is also a Regional Study focused on the feasibility of developing a consolidated communications system for all public safety agencies throughout Los Angeles County.

This is the second status report and it provides information on:

- RCC Recommendations on the Proposed System
- Work Related to the CFSCS RFP
- Finance Task Force
- Project Management and Administration
- Related Projects (Regional System)

RCC RECOMMENDATIONS

RCC has finalized its recommendations for the radio spectrum to be used for voice and data. All members of the Executive Committee agree with RCC's recommendation. Specifically:

- Voice communications should be transmitted on the UHF spectrum (both Fire and Sheriff currently use the UHF spectrum for voice).
- Data communications should initially utilize the 800 Megahertz spectrum and be migrated to the 700 Megahertz spectrum when it becomes available (the County currently uses UHF spectrum for data). Transitioning to the 700/800 Megahertz spectrum will allow the system to carry significantly more data at higher speeds than are currently available.

These recommendations are also consistent with the regional communication system approach discussed later in this report.

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RCC has finalized its recommendations for voice related equipment. All members of the Executive Committee agree with RCC's recommendation.

RCC recommended a voice standard, referred to as P25, which ensures interoperability and compatibility of portable and mobile equipment, regardless of manufacturer. This is important both in terms of the ultimate system replacement and the interim measures the County must take pending the development of a consolidated system.

Fire, Sheriff and OPS have critical needs related to replacing old, unreliable voice equipment. The adoption of the P25 standard for voice means that:

- Portable and mobile voice equipment purchased to meet current needs can be competitively bid. There is no need to sole source on a particular manufacturer.
- Portable and mobile voice equipment purchased to meet urgent needs today will be compatible with the consolidated system requirements.

There still are some elements of the system infrastructure (base stations and equipment deployed at mountain top tower locations) that are proprietary to specific manufacturers. The Fire Department currently uses Motorola equipment and the Sheriff uses MA/COM equipment. Some of this equipment will have to be replaced prior to the development of a consolidated system and, more than likely, it will not be compatible with the consolidated system. However, there is little choice in this regard as the current systems must be kept operational.

RCC has finalized its recommendations related to a common data system.

RCC delivered a report recommending a data radio system based on several criteria, including the ability to carry dispatch traffic, support large public agency users, provide reliable coverage, deliver messages in a timely manner and other operational and business considerations. The Executive Committee has now adopted RCC's recommendations.

The Departments will no longer pursue major upgrade to address their interim data needs and instead will pursue the RCC recommended solution. The Executive Committee will work together to develop a common approach to addressing current, critical, data related radio issues. Critical needs for mobile data will be given priority and will be addressed in the RFP.

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WORK RELATED TO THE CFSCS RFP

RCC is currently developing the requirements for the RFP. Some early deliverables have been delayed due to the fact that the Executive Committee requested RCC to do additional work. A revised schedule has been developed and the new target date for completion of this task is June 28, 2007.

FINANCE TASK FORCE

As reported previously, a Finance Task Force has been established with representatives from ISD, CAO, Fire, Sheriff, and OPS. This group has already reviewed the options identified by RCC in the 2001 CFSCS study, which include traditional funding (bonds, LACCAL, budget), State and Federal funding, and private sector development. The Task Force agreed to further explore the private sector development option. This is a Public/Private Partnership concept based on a commercial charge back model similar to how users obtain and pay for cell phone equipment and services. Expenditures under this model may be by paying a periodic fixed fee, or may be based on the amount of system usage or inventory.

The Task Force is continuing to meet and will develop language for inclusion in the RFP that calls for alternative and creative financing options in the applicable vendors responses.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Project Executive Committee

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting forth the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee member departments has been finalized. All departments have reached agreement on the MOU. Among other things, this MOU establishes duties and responsibilities of the various departments and formalizes the Committee membership and decision making process.

Engagement of a Project Manager

The CAO has selected a Project Manager, Mr. Michael Thayer, of Thayer Consulting and has negotiated a final agreement. The Project Manager began work on May 15, 2006.

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Additional Project Resources

The CAO Real Estate Division is currently procuring office space for the project. In the interim, the Fire and Sheriff's Departments will identify and provide offices for their respective staff.

RELATED PROJECTS

Regional Interoperability Steering Committee (RISC)

RCC has completed a study on the feasibility of developing a standards-based, shared communications system for all public safety agencies in Los Angeles County. Technical staff from the Sheriff, Fire and ISD participated in the study. The CAO, Fire Chief, Sheriff and ISD Director are participating on an Executive Steering Committee.

RCC's recommendation is to build a consolidated system using (1) the 700/800 MHz spectrum as the regional standard for data, and (2) the UHF spectrum as the regional standard for voice.

The CFSCS Executive Committee is supportive of RISC, as well as development of a single platform for communications among public safety agencies in Los Angeles County. Details such as governance, asset ownership, operational and maintenance responsibility, cost allocation methodology, as well as other issues, remain to be worked out. The process is evolving and the Board will be updated in future status reports.